

EXHIBIT

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Wildlife Service in 2006 reported for Montana, 300 wolves in 59 packs, Wyoming, 314 in 34 packs, and Idaho, 650 in 70 packs. Those figures do not show single animals nor all packs.

The USFWS in 2006 reports "wolf numbers are quadruple what federal officials said was necessary for biological recovery." Ed Bangs of the service stated, "We've got a lot more wolves than we thought we'd have. They're spilling out onto livestock country."

The biological information shows far more wolves than necessary for de-listing so what is the problem? Is the problem less federal money to federal and state agencies under the Endangered Species Act?

Before wolves were re-introduced from Alberta and British Columbia, there was a concern about what impact wolves would have on hunting and recreational opportunity. I requested information about that recently from the USFWS under the Federal Data Quality Act, which stipulates that federal agencies must assure all information presented is the highest quality and integrity or they will be in violation of the law. Their reports do not even mention big game — only livestock.

What is the outlook on the wolf issue in Montana? In my view, there is only one practical alternative: Let the private landowner protect his or her property with no long government form to fill out. Sport hunting with permits sounds good but won't do much to reduce wolves, and elsewhere it shows hunter success for hunting wolves from the ground is less than 5 percent regardless of the number of permits.

A state bill being introduced by the agriculture community, LC1321, seems to be a positive approach. Sportsmen and hunters should provide input and support for this bill that would benefit valuable big game populations as well as livestock. With the political climate today, very little wolf control on public lands is expected, but most wolves will eventually end up on private lands anyway with the highest densities of livestock and wintering wildlife. The "too little, too late wolf policy" isn't working.

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## **Wolf management changes are sorely needed**

Recent reports on state and federal wolf plans make me wonder what they mean by "wolf management." Is it more like "wolf preservation?" The population and number of breeding pairs have exceeded the original prediction for de-listing threefold. The U.S. Fish and